

Statement of Rep. Henry A. Waxman on H.Res. 333
November 6, 2007

Today, the House voted on a motion to bypass the Judiciary Committee and debate H.Res. 333, a resolution recommending the impeachment of Vice President Dick Cheney.

I do not take impeachment lightly. Having been elected to the House in 1974 on the heels of resignation of President Nixon, I fully understand the gravity of the impeachment process. And having served in the House during the partisan and political campaign that pursued the impeachment of President Clinton, I have seen the detriment of its abuse.

While I recognize the eagerness of Representative Kucinich and other supporters of impeachment to move this resolution swiftly, I believe the House has a constitutional and institutional responsibility to handle such resolutions and their underlying accusations with due process and regular order. That is why I voted to refer the measure back to the House Judiciary Committee for its evaluation and consideration.

In addition to concerns about process, I personally believe that impeachment is not a successful strategy for challenging the Bush Administration. On a practical level there aren't enough votes in the House or the Senate for impeachment or a conviction. Furthermore, pursuing impeachment would polarize our country at a time when Americans are unifying across party lines to oppose the President's policies in Iraq. It does not make sense to divert attention and focus on a losing strategy against an administration that will be out of office next year.

As Chairman of the House Committee on Oversight and Government Reform I am committed to holding this Administration accountable for its actions. I believe the best way to do so is by restoring the essential checks and balances that languished during previous congresses. I am determined to fully investigate acts of misconduct and misjudgment and learn from the Administration's mistakes so that we can fix our policies and prevent future abuses.